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## THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 50 associate NBC radio stations, Tuesday, January 14, 1936.

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Hello Folks: I have no doubt every commercial fruit and vegetable grower in the country is asking himself today what the crop season of 1936 has in store for him. During my last chat with you a little over a week ago I mentioned the importance of planting good seed and cultivating correctly in order to better the market quality of the products and the yields per acre. The aim of course is to widen the spread between the cost of producing a bushel or a pound and the price received for it.

One thing is certain. We all must eat if we are to live through 1936. Those of us who live on farms will display our wisdom by having a good garden and producing the greater part of the fruits and vegetables required for our own tables. Judging from the letters that I have received during the past week or two a lot of home and market gardeners, like myself, have resolved to make an early start and to have better gardens in 1936.

One of the main essentials to having a good garden is to start early but it is of equal importance to keep the garden working throughout the growing season. There are about ten of our vegetables that give best results when they are planted early. You can often gain a week or ten days in the time a crop is ready for use by simply taking a little chance on weather conditions and planting early or just as soon as the soil is in condition to work. I dare say some of you southern gardeners planted garden peas last fall and are using peas from your gardens now, while others will be planting during January and February. You southern folks will all be using peas and other vegetables from your gardens before we northern gardeners can turn a spadeful of soil or plow a furrow in our gardens.

By way of illustration of the value of early planting, about a year ago I had a letter from a lady at Dayton, Ohio, who wanted to know if I could tell why she and her husband had such poor results with peas in their garden. I advised early planting on rich, well-drained soil and thought no more about it, but just the other day I had another letter from this lady, a sort of appreciation letter, in which she said that she and her husband had followed my advice and had planted peas on March 27th, which was early for that section, and that they had wonderful results.

The first seed catalog of the season came to me from a southern seed firm about a week ago. The seed catalogs, like the robins, are a sure herald of spring and January 15 to March 15 is garden planting time throughout the greater part of the Southern States. The twitter of the robins will not be heard nor will the buds be swelling in the northern sections for many weeks but there is a lot that you northern folks may be doing during the winter toward getting your gardens started early. You can prune grape vines and tie them to supports, and in case the weather permits give those old

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apple and peach trees a careful pruning and at least one dormant spraying. Unless you have been keeping in close touch with the latest on spraying, let me suggest that you consult your County Agricultural Agent or get in touch with the fruit specialist of your State College or Experiment Station. Spraying practices have become so localized that no general directions can safely be given.

Plant diseases and insects exact a heavy toll from our fruit and vegetable crops, and providing means for protecting our gardens and orchards from these pests is just as important as planting or cultivation.

Your cabbage growers who have had trouble with the disease known as cabbage yellows should by all means plant the resistant strains which were developed in Wisconsin within recent years. Most southern gardeners have suffered losses from tomato wilt and are now planting the resistant varieties such as Marglobe, Pritchard and Break O'Day. Remember, though, the wilt-resistant varieties like the ordinary varieties are more or less subject to the attacks of the leaf diseases and require occasional spraying. Many of you have heard it said that varieties of potatoes "run out" in the course of time. The scientists have found that the so-called "running out" of potatoes is due to the work of virus diseases, those insidious diseases that you can not see and that work in the sap of the plants. Certain of the newer varieties of potatoes like the Katahdin and the Chippewa show marked resistance to the disease known as "Mild Mosaic" and also to scab and give promise of being resistant to late blight, one of the worst diseases that the white potato is heir to.

Improvements in the varieties and in cultural methods are being made all along the line and most of these improved varieties are now in the hands of the seedsmen and you can secure them. I'm sticking to my New Year's resolution to have a better garden in 1936, and if any of you want information to help you in keeping a similar resolution, I hope you'll feel free to ask it of your State college or the Department of Agriculture.

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